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AUTHORITY

AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (27 Nov 68) FOR OT UT 683149

2 December 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 459th
Signal Battalion (CA), Period Ending 31 July 1968

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.
3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:



C. A. STANFIEL
Colonel, AGC
Acting The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

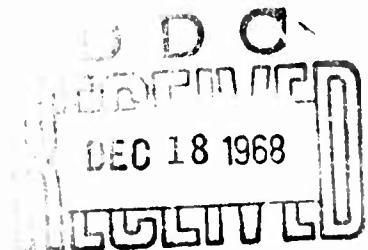
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AD 844828

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 459TH SIGNAL BATTALION (CA)
APO 96240

SCCPV-NG,NT

14 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 459th Signal Battalion (CA) for Period
Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1)

1. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities

a. General.

(1) Command Changes:

(a) On 17 May 1968, CPT LeRoy W. Denniston replaced CPT David H. Cavin as Commanding Officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 459th Signal Battalion.

(b) On 17 May 1968, CPT David H. Cavin replaced CPT Moran as Commanding Officer, Company B, 459th Signal Battalion.

(c) On 11 June 1968, CPT Eugene B. Dalbey replaced CPT Bartz as Commanding Officer, 228th Signal Company, 459th Signal Battalion.

(d) On 30 June 1968, CPT John M. Rice replaced MAJ Robert A. Kaiser as Commanding Officer, 518th Signal Company, 459th Signal Battalion.

(e) On 25 July 1968, 1LT Roy D. Stearns replaced CPT von E. Bassett as Commanding Officer, Company A, 459th Signal Battalion.

(f) See inclosure number (1) for present organizational structure of the battalion.

(2) Administrative Problems:

(a) The unit Chapel program has been enhanced by installation of overhead fans in the Chapel and a P.A. System used to broadcast church music through the headquarters area prior to services. Attendance has increased significantly.

(b) Painting of all buildings in the Battalion Headquarters area has significantly improved appearance and increased unit morale.

FOR OT UT
683149
INCLOSURE 1

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(3) Operations:

- (a) Unit organization structure included as inclosure #1.
- (b) Ninety-One operational days are covered for this reporting period.
- (c) The ROK Army furnished 40 personnel to provide local security for signal site located on Vung Ro Mountain.

(4) Personnel: (See Inclosure 1, Personnel Gains-Losses)

(a) As a result of insufficient input of 26L personnel, this Battalion has established a "crash" training program to alleviate the temporary shortage in this critical MOS.

(b) The MTO&E's for the 459th Signal Battalion made no provision for organizational maintenance of any refrigeration equipment. As the Battalion received over fifty (50) trailer mounted air-conditioners, it became necessary to insure that a responsive maintenance capability existed. A two-stage program was established. (1) Personnel with mechanical maintenance training, ie., vehicular and generator, were selected to learn organizational maintenance procedures on the air-conditioning equipment at a local DS unit. (2) The Battalion MTO&E is undergoing an intensive analysis and revision to bring both equipment and personnel authorizations in line with actual mission requirements. Refrigeration specialists, MOS 51L20, are being included in the company power generator maintenance sections.

(5) Logistics:

(a) Lack of repair parts for 10KW units, especially magnetos, raised the generator deadline to over 25%. The replacement of units, for which repair parts were not available, by new 10KW units significantly reduced this problem. 45KW generators are in short supply. There are only 11 on hand of the 60 authorized. Additional units are on requisition but this item is not available in country.

(b) The closed loop exchange program for communication electronics equipment has been very beneficial and the CE deadline has been kept to a minimum. During the quarter 75 pieces of equipment were exchanged.

(c) Logistical support has been improved through the establishment of a supply expeditor at the Cam Ranh Bay Depot. This NCO, is authorized to hand carry and follow up on requisitions, and check on the availability of supplies, etc. This individual is attached to one of the signal sites located at the depot but works directly for the Battalion S-4.

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(d) Turn in of 89 pieces of TOE equipment, which were excess to operational requirements, has improved maintenance by allowing concentration on operating mission essential equipment.

(e) Transportable air-conditioners presently come equipped with one 5KW generator. Use of other power sources, either commercial or larger generators, minimizes maintenance problems and provides more efficient operation of air-conditioners critical to operational equipment.

b. Chronology

(1) 3 May 68: A 16 channel tonepack, 77UX19, was activated between Tuy Hoa and Tan Son Nhut Air Bases. The FGC-61A, component of the AN/TRC-90 on the 77UT4K tropospheric scatter system was used. Considerable effort was expended in getting the tonepack operational. Each channel modem had to be tested and adjusted. Frequency meter measurements were required to adjust the frequency shift on individual modems.

(2) 3 May 68: Microwave system 77UMV2 was deactivated. This 45 channel system released equipment for use elsewhere and required close coordination between the 518th Signal Company and Company A, 459th Signal Battalion, to transfer existing circuits to other microwave or VHF systems.

(3) 5 May 68: A limited technical control facility was installed on Vung Ro Mountain. An SB-675 was inspected, transported to Phu Hiep, and emplaced by the 261st Signal Company. Purpose of the installation was to place a terminal and interface for circuits and systems in an area where no capability previously existed.

(4) 7 May 68: Brigadier General William VanHarlingen visited the 228th Signal Company, Company A, Company B and the Battalion Headquarters Area.

(5) 10 May 68: An AN/FRC-93, commercial single sideband radio, was installed in the Company A high frequency radio park at Camp McDermott. Installation of this radio provides subscribers at the Headquarters, I Field Force, Vietnam, phone patch capability throughout Vietnam.

(6) 18 May 68: Microwave systems 77UMG1, 77UMV3 and 77UM90 (all 45 channel) were relocated from the old site in the Nha Trang Long Lines Battalion area to the Camp McDermott Signal Site, a distance of approximately 5 miles. This move enabled all 459th Signal Battalion radio systems in Nha Trang to be centrally located, thereby centralizing control, conserving manpower and facilitating maintenance.

(7) 18 May 68: Construction was completed on an AN/FSQ-75 Aircraft Control Tower at the Army Airfield, Phu Hiep. The 261st Signal Company furnished labor, coordination, delivery of materials and used their equipment in installing the tower.

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(8) 19 May 68: Transient telephone support was given to Battery A, 6/84th Artillery during its stay on Camp McDermott. This service enabled the battery to have ready access to fire direction coordinators and logistical support facilities in their area of operation.

(9) 25 May 68: The 459th Signal Battalion Organizational Day Review was held on the newly created Battalion Parade Field. All companies participated with a unit being furnished by a buddy unit of the 459th, the 651st ARVN Signal Battalion, stationed in Nha Trang. A marching band was provided by the ARVN NCO Academy, which is also located in Nha Trang.

(10) 31 May 68: The 459th Signal Battalion continued to play a significant role in the defense of Camp McDermott. An operations Defense Plan was issued to specifically outline the Battalion's responsibility. The plan was formulated, prepared, issued and implemented by the battalion. Companies constructed fighting bunkers and affected coordination with other Camp McDermott units to carry out the intent of the plan.

(11) 2 June 68: A 100 pair cable was installed between the AASC frame of Company A to the Army Area Communications Center. The new cable will provide sufficient cable pairs to terminate all circuits when the new communications center is activated in late August 1968. Length of the cable was approximately 300 feet.

(12) 4 June 68: A 50 pair cable was extended from the North Nha Trang 200 pair cable to the Technical Control Facility and the AASC frame, a distance of 11,500 feet. This cable extension allows Republic of Korea subscribers of the 100th Log Command access to interface and control facilities in the Nha Trang area.

(13) 7 June 68: Request was made by the MACV Advisor Team 28 at Tuy Hoa to provide six radio operators to operate FM and SSB radios in Advisor Artillery, Medical Evacuation and other emergency nets. All operators came from the 459th Signal Battalion.

(14) 10 June 68: A 50 pair cable was extended into the Nha Trang Installation Defense Coordinator Tactical Operations Center from the Headquarters, I Field Vietnam, a distance of approximately 300 feet. Republic of Korea subscribers in the TOC had US telephones installed by the 459th Signal Battalion.

(15) 17 June 68: A switchboard operator exchange program was initiated in cooperation with the 73rd Signal Battalion at Cam Ranh Bay. This program enabled operators of both Long Distance switchboards to visit, operate, and compare operational procedures with a goal toward overall improvement of service.

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(16) 19 June 68: The 518th Signal Company completed construction of a 66' AB-216 tower at Phan Rang. Work was performed by the 518th "tower team" which specializes in maintaining and surveying microwave towers over the entire I & II CTZ.

(17) The battalion gained one additional signal site when operational control was assumed over the Nha Trang West Signal complex. This site supports Republic of Korea Forces located there and has two operating 12 channel systems (VHF). This increased to 14 the number of sites under the control of the 459th Signal Battalion. Systems are DBH01 and DBH09.

(18) Thirteen signalmen from the 459th have completed the Special Forces Reconco Orientation course in Nha Trang. The first complement enrolled in the 9 day course on 23 June. Objectives of the course are to review basic patrolling techniques, physical fitness and leadership. This is an ideal course in that it provides personnel on isolated sites an opportunity to gain confidence prior to conducting limited patrolling outside the site perimeter.

(19) 10 July 68: LTC T1, Commanding Officer of the 65th ARVN Signal Group visited the battalion, and was provided with a tour of the Camp McDermott operational areas.

(20) 18 July: Brigadier General Robert D. Terry, CG STRATCOMPAAC, toured the Camp McDermott operational areas.

(21) 20 July 68: AN 05B20, radio operator, was attached to the MACV Advisor Team 35 at Khanh Duong to operate FM and SSB radios in the advisor nets. In addition, an electronic maintenance team visited the site and provided necessary assistance in returning their radios to an operational condition.

(22) 17-21 July 68: Circuits from the 77URC2 and 77URC3 systems (temporarily on VHF radio) were transferred to a multipair cable between North Nha Trang and Nha Trang. The original cable carrier systems were damaged during the TET offensive and now, with these circuits on the multipair cable, radio equipment will be released for use elsewhere.

(23) 26 July 68: A new 12 channel VHF system, DBH10, was installed between Phu Hiep II and Vung Ro Mountain. Cable from the Vung Ro site to Republic of Korea Forces near the base of the mountain will greatly assist coordination between ROK units in the Phu Hiep - Vung Ro area. All equipment was supplied from assets within the 459th Signal Battalion.

(24) 28 July 68: Three MRC-73s were extracted from signal sites for turn in under the 1st Signal Brigade UHF expansion program for the 2nd Signal Group. This mission involved considerable planning to insure that systems in service were not interrupted during the extraction.

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(25) 28 July 68: Two AN/TRC-110 radio repeaters were received. Training has commenced and will be expanded as frequencies become available.

(26) 29 July 68: The battalion completed the program of normal-through on all SB-675s. This was a continuing program throughout the entire quarter. A total of five SB-675s either have frames or junction boxes installed to make the normal-through configuration possible.

(27) 30 July 68: A 459th Signal Battalion Grounding Survey Team began a program of visiting each site within the battalion to test and inspect grounding of all equipment. The program has paid dividends since high resistance grounds were detected in some cases. Immediate action was taken to correct all grounds to within the tolerances established by 1st Signal Brigade regulations.

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2. Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel: None

b. Operations:

(1) Large Antenna Field for HF Radio

(a) OBSERVATION: RF feedback on a newly installed single sideband commercial radio.

(b) EVALUATION: an AN/FRC-93 radio was installed within the operating facility of the Camp McDermott HF radio site. This involved erection of one additional doublet antenna in an area already crowded with 5 other doublets. It was noted that RF energy was present on the handset and chassis of the commercial radio when the transmitters of adjacent AN/GRC-26Ds were keyed. Antenna was relocated within the site, but orienting it perpendicular to the other antennas did not solve the problem. The commercial radio had to be relocated to another building 100 feet away in order to prevent feedback. Effective communications were then established.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That when an HF radio park is installed consideration be given to a large antenna field. The antennas should be as perpendicular, when possible, to prevent induced RF feedback and yet maintain the radiation pattern necessary for contact with all stations in the net.

(2) Cable Problem Inside the SB-249 Switchboard. Component Part of AN/MTC-9.

(a) OBSERVATION: Drops did not appear on all positions when a subscriber called.

(b) EVALUATION: The cable in the SB-249 switchboard is paralleled to every other position in the installation of this type switchboard. It was noted that a series of drops did not appear at each position when a subscriber rang the board. Upon review and inspection of the installation procedure it was noted that the initial cable was not secured properly to the switchboard before adding the tie cables. After the cable was properly secured all drops appeared simultaneously.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That extra care be taken when installing cable in the SB-249 so that all appearances will be operational.

(3) Frequency Drift of the AN/TRC-29 Receiver

(a) OBSERVATION: Incorrect frequency was being received by the AN/TRC-29 receiver.

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(b) EVALUATION: A microwave system failed and in bringing up the standby system there was no evidence that the incorrect frequency was being received. This took place in an area crowded with microwave frequencies. The receiver in the new system had just been tuned and every indication was that the receiver was on the proper frequency. The nature of microwave receiver is such that it can be peaked on an image frequency unless extreme caution is exercised by the operator. It was not until the transmit operator pulled a specific channel modem of the TCC-13 that the wrong receive frequency was verified. Necessary corrections were then made.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Immediate action when placing a standby system in operation should be to pull a channel modem of the TCC-13 to determine that correct frequency is being received.

(4) Use of Meter Readings of the AN/TRC-29 as a Guide Only

(a) OBSERVATION: After the operator observes the meter readings on the AN/TRC-29 he must troubleshoot from that point.

(b) EVALUATION: Metering circuits of the AN/TRC-29 are valuable visual means of determining its operational status. Although certain minimums and maximums are required according to the technical manuals, age of the equipment or terrain between hops are not taken into consideration. Knowledge of readings for particular sets will allow the operator to note any deviation and isolate specific problem areas. The operator can then proceed to further isolate specific tubes, resistors, capacitors, etc, that are contributing to meter deviations.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That meter readings be used only as a guide in trouble-shooting. The operator must be competent and patient in going from a bad meter reading to the source of the problem. This is most important because metering circuits themselves may be malfunctioning. In addition normal readings should be immediately available for all systems.

(5) Air Conditioner Failure

(a) OBSERVATION: Failure rate of the 60,000 B.T.U. Air Conditioners has increased during recent months due to direct exposure to rainfall

(b) EVALUATION: Failure rate of these air conditioners was decreased when overhead shelters were built. This prevented excess moisture from seeping into the distribution box and causing the failures.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: All units which are currently using the 60,000 B.T.U. air conditioners for equipment cooling should be made aware of the overhead shelters and their importance.

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(6) Adverse Weather Effects on AN/TRC-29

(a) OBSERVATION: Numerous microwave outages during rainy weather have been traced directly to water in the transmission launcher of the AN/TRC-29 antenna system.

(b) EVALUATION: Outages due to water in the launcher were decreased when added precautions were taken during Monsoon season. Launchers were retaped and plastic covering was placed over them.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Extra weather precautions should be made prior to the Monsoon season when utilizing the Radio Set AN/TRC-29. Taping on the launchers should be checked or retaped and plastic covering should be used in rainy areas.

(7) Malfunction of AN/TCC-13 Ringer

(a) OBSERVATION: A defective F2 fuse in the AN/TCC-13 will completely disable its ringing capability.

(b) EVALUATION: It has been noted that one of the causes of ringing problems encountered with AN/TCC-13 equipment was a defective F2 fuse in the sub-cycle generator of the control monitor drawer. All ringing from the distant end subscriber will be received by the AN/TCC-13, however, the 20 cycle ring will not be passed through the loop side of the modems when the F2 fuse is defective.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: When ringing problems develop with the AN/TCC-13 equipment an immediate check should be made of the F2 fuse.

(8) Wiring Faults of the J-2317

(a) OBSERVATION: The internal line and loop hook groups of the J-2317 distribution box are not necessarily properly wired.

(b) EVALUATION: Recently, there was a communications problem caused by improper wiring of the internal line and loop hook groups in the J-2317. The loop hocks were not in continuity with the associated line hocks and consequently the four groups inside the box did not match with the corresponding four 26 pair cables.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Prior to installation, the internal wiring of the line and loop hook groups of the J-2317 distribution box should be checked to insure that they are properly oriented.

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- d. Training: None
- d. Intelligence: None
- e. Logistics: None
- f. Organization:

(1) Mission versus TOE Capabilities

(a) OBSERVATION: Mission requirements of this unit are often irreconcilable with approved Table of Organization and Equipment, and time delay in processing new authorizations dictates unit must perform mission without authorization for personnel or equipment.

(b) EVALUATION: This unit is required to perform functions not originally intended when organized and also is equipped to perform missions not presently required. An MTOE study has been initiated to maintain an alignment between capabilities and requirements. This MTOE will be presented to higher Headquarters to provide a realistic assessment of requirements versus present capabilities. This procedure is still extremely time consuming.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That mission assignment and instructions for this area include authority for necessary changes to TO&E.

(2) ARFORSTAT Report Inconsistencies

(a) OBSERVATION: A very low ARFORSTAT rating was given this unit because of its limited TOE basis.

(b) EVALUATION: Although this unit is fully capable of performing its assigned mission a low rating has resulted because equipment not essential for day to day operation has been turned in as excess although required to be on hand according to the TOE. This results in a false picture of this units functional capabilities in light of the additional equipment presently on hand and in use in excess of TOE.

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(c) RECOMMENDATION: That a more realistic criteria be developed for representation of the status of active duty units in other than TOE commitments.

g. Other: None

2 Incl

1. Organizational Chart

~~2. Personnel gains and losses~~

Withdrawn, HQ, DA

John W. Stillwell
JOHN W. STILLWELL
LTC, SigC
Commanding

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SCCPV-NG-OPT (14 Aug 68) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 459th Signal Battalion (CA) for Period
Ending 31 July 1968, (RCS CSFOR-65) (RI)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 21ST SIGNAL GROUP, APO 96240 25 August 1968

TO: Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade, ATTN: SCCPV-OP, APO 96384


1. Transmitted herewith is one copy , Headquarters, 459th Signal Battalion Report, subject as above.

2. Concur in the commanders observation and recommendations with the following comments and/or exceptions:

a. Reference Section 1, para 1a(4)(a): Reassignment of MOS 26L personnel from Regional Comm Group by 1st Signal Brigade in August 1968, should relieve the temporary shortage in this critical MOS in the 459th Signal Battalion.

b. Reference Section 1, para 1b(22): System 77URC3 is still active. System will be deactivated upon receipt of line amplifiers, at which time circuits may be cutover to cable.

3. This report is considered adequate.


DANIEL W. MC ELWEE
COL, SigC
Commanding

SCCPV-OP-CR (14 Aug 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 459th Signal Battalion (CA) for Period
Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 24 Sep 1968

TO: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15.
2. The report has been reviewed by this headquarters and is concurred in as indorsed with the following comments and/or exceptions concerning referenced paragraphs:

a. Paragraph 2f(1), p. 10. This headquarters is in complete agreement with the expressed evaluation in regard to the extended period of time required to process an MTOE through channels. It is hoped that the area of mission assignment and TOE authorization will improve once the TAADS system is fully implemented. The recommendation however, is not considered feasible. DA has final approval on MTOEs and consequently the change resulting from the mission assignment must be submitted by the unit during each TAADS update.

b. Paragraph 2f(2), p. 10. Concur; however, Department of the Army has recently made the reporting criteria less stringent. For reporting and calculations, units will no longer consider as full TOE or authorized, as appropriate, those equipment items which are being deleted from requirements (level 1) or authorization by MTOE/MTDA actions submitted by USASTRATCOM but not yet approved by Headquarters, DA. This then will create a more realistic portrait of a unit's readiness as is demanded by its operational necessities. It should also be noted that the cited problem is one to which DA is giving its attention.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

s/ William G. Skinner
t/ WILLIAM G. SKINNER
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

Copy furnished:

Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications Command,
ATTN: SCCOP, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

AVHGC-DST (14 Aug 68) 3d Ind MAJ Klingman/ds/IBN 4433
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 459th Signal Battalion (CA) for Period
Ending 31 July 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 18 OCT 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1968 from Headquarters, 459th Signal Battalion (CA), and concurs with the report as modified by the preceding indorsements.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



A.R. GUENTHER
CPT. AGC
ASST. ADJUTANT GENERAL

Cy furn:
HQ 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM)
HQ 459th Sig Bn (CA)

GPOP-DT (14 Aug 68) 4th Ind

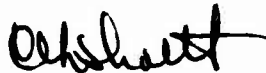
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 459th Sig Bn (CA) for Period
Ending 31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO ~~San~~ Francisco 96558 14 NOV 1968

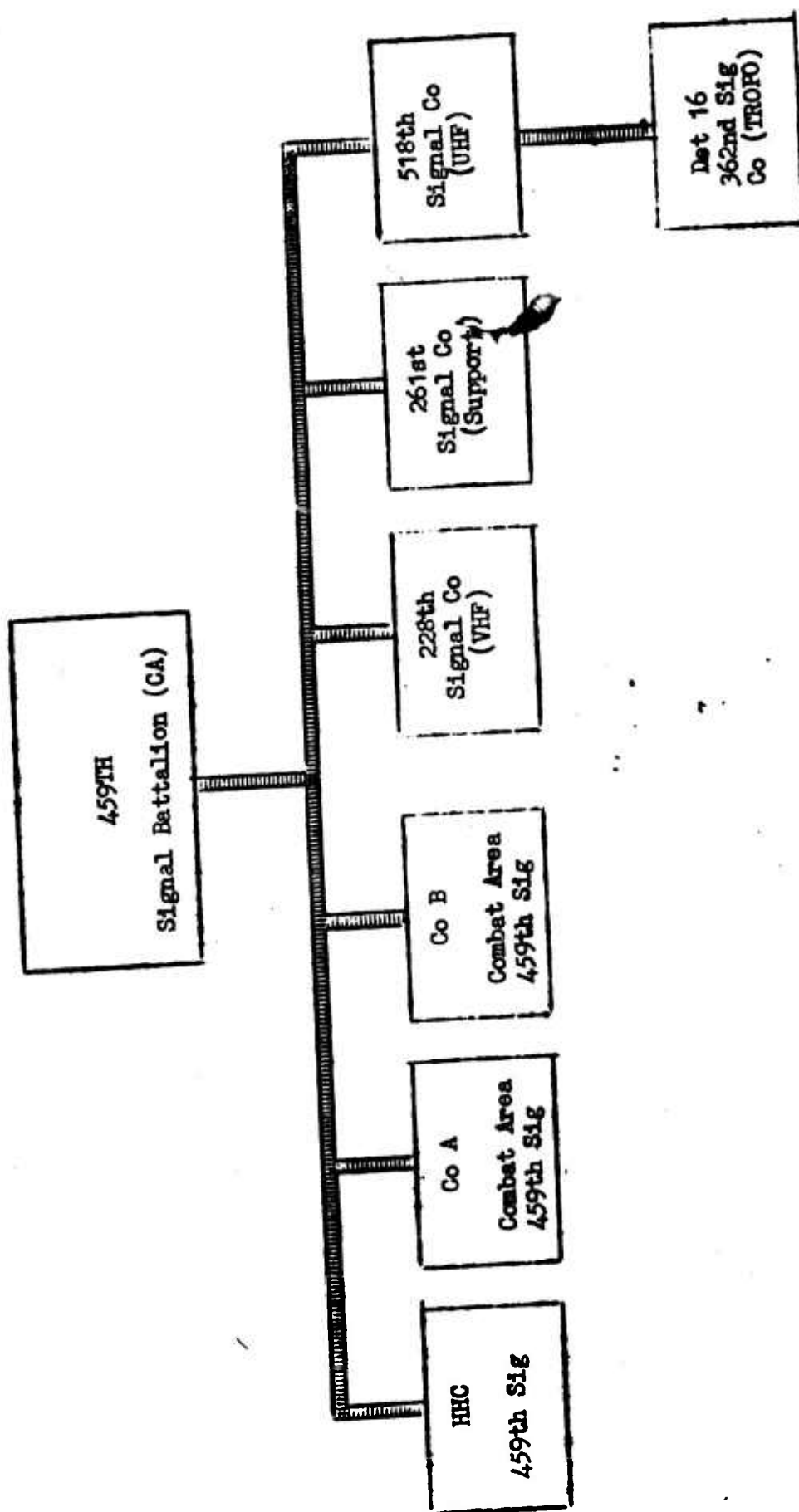
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
459TH SIGNAL BN

Incl 1

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Security Classification

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Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 May - 31 Jul 68			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
CO, 459th Signal Battalion (CA)			
6. REPORT DATE		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
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DD FORM 1473
1 NOV 62

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The following items are recommended for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Index:

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* Subject Title: A short (one sentence or phrase) description of the item of interest.

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